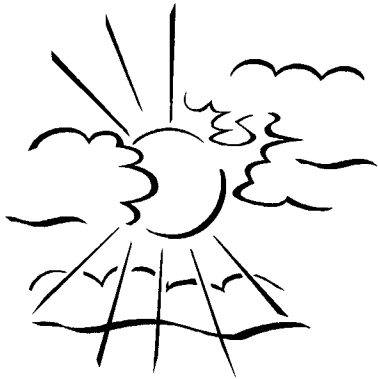


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*Important story at this spot

**Articles in Today's Clips
Wednesday, October 5, 2005**

(Be sure to maximize your screen to read your clips)

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Mother sentenced to prison Judge calls scalding of child one of the worst abuse cases he's seen

Wednesday, October 5, 2005

BY CATHERINE O'DONNELL
Ann Arbor News Staff Reporter

Washtenaw County Circuit Court Judge Donald Shelton called the child abuse almost the worst he's ever seen.

Earlier this year, Williams' partner, Byron McFarlin, was convicted of first-degree child abuse for forcing Williams' 7-year-old son into a tub of scalding water.

"I think you traded your son's safety for some drugs," Shelton said to Williams on Tuesday.

"It's almost incomprehensible to me," he continued, "that your child was brought out of the tub with flesh falling off his feet, and you decided to do nothing."

Washtenaw County Sheriff's investigators said the boy was denied medical treatment for nearly two weeks. They also said McFarlin allowed the boy no food, only water, and that he was forced to stay in a closet of their apartment.

The boy suffered third-degree burns to his feet and legs and was hospitalized for a month.

According to a report submitted to the court, the child will require plastic surgery.

Williams admitted she struck her son with a belt and that she has been a drug user.

Weeping, she also said that while she has been a victim of domestic violence, she has changed her life. "I would like to ask my son and daughter for forgiveness," she said.

Acknowledging that Williams was not the one who forced the child into the scalding water, Shelton said Williams had nevertheless betrayed her child. "I hope," he said to the woman, "you never have another child entrusted to your care."

Several minutes later, as sheriff deputies approached to lead Williams away, she collapsed on the floor and sobbed.

The prison sentences will run concurrently, but Williams could spend less time in prison for child abuse than for check forgery. The child abuse sentence is 23 months to 48 months; the forgery sentence is 1.5 years to 14 years. She will be eligible for parole after 23 months.

A hearing has been scheduled for next Tuesday to consider whether Williams' parental rights will be terminated.

News staff reporter Catherine O'Donnell can be reached at codonnell@annarbornews.com or (734) 994-6831.

Trial coming for teacher in sex case

Wednesday, October 05, 2005

THE SAGINAW NEWS

CARO -- A 27-year-old teacher who faces charges of having a sexual affair with an eighth-grade student is headed to trial.

Kristen Margrif of Mayville faces seven counts of third-degree criminal sexual conduct with a person younger than 16 -- a 15-year felony -- and a misdemeanor fourth-degree count.

Tuscola County Circuit Judge Patrick R. Joslyn will preside over the case. Court officials have not set a trial date.

Margrif, an English teacher at Kingston High School, is accused of having trysts with the male student in her car and inside a resale shop where the pupil worked in June and July.

She waived her arraignment Monday in Circuit Court.

In August, Prosecutor Mark Reese offered to allow Margrif to plead guilty to three counts of second-degree criminal sexual conduct. As part of the deal, prosecutors would not oppose a judge capping her sentence to one year in jail and four years of probation.

Margrif remains free on a \$45,000 personal recognizance bond.

Margrif is on voluntary unpaid leave from her teaching duties until her court proceedings conclude, Kingston school officials have said.

Jury continues deliberations in Trouten CSC case

Coldwater Daily Reporter

October 5, 2005

By Don Reid/Staff Writer

COLDWATER -- A Branch County Circuit Court jury will return today to continue deliberating the faith of David Trouten, Jr., charged with two counts each of first- and second-degree criminal sexual conduct (CSC).

The jury asked for the video replay of the victim's testimony, and then deliberated for an hour before retiring for the night.

A 14-year-boy took the witness stand on Monday in Branch County Circuit Court and testified that David Trouten, now 30, then only 19, smoked "weed" on a metal clip, watched porno videos, then invited him into the bedroom for mutual oral sex.

Case on hold as prosecution appeals decision

STACY LANGLEY, The Huron Daily Tribune

09/30/2005

BAD AXE — Both sides in the second-degree criminal sexual conduct case involving Gary R. Goebel, son of a former Bad Axe area daycare provider, have been waiting months for the trial date to arrive. But just days before the trial was set to begin, there was a major development. Huron County Circuit Court Judge M. Richard Knoblock threw out potentially damaging statements made by Goebel to the Michigan State Police.

On Thursday morning, when the bench trial for Goebel was to get under way, it was evident the case might very well be dismissed. Goebel's attorney, Deanna L. Kelley, appeared shocked when she learned just moments before heading into court that prosecutors were going to forge ahead with the case. Prosecutors asked the Michigan Court of Appeals to overturn Knoblock's decision and allow Goebel's statements to Michigan State Police Trooper J.T. Birkenhauer to be admitted during the trial.

Knoblock ruled Sept. 23 — after hearing testimony during a Walker Hearing from Goebel, his mother, Zita Goebel, and Birkenhauer — that Goebel felt he was in police custody when he was being questioned at the Michigan State Police post in Bad Axe.

Since Goebel wasn't read his Miranda Rights, Knoblock determined the verbal statements he made would not be admitted at trial. After the verbal statement was taken by Birkenhauer, he then read Goebel his Miranda Rights before taking a written statement from Goebel. Knoblock ruled the written statement must be dismissed as well. Knoblock characterized the written statement as "fruits of a poisonous tree."

When someone is in police custody and being interrogated, police are obligated to read them their Miranda Rights.

Huron County Assistant Prosecutor Gerald Prill asked Knoblock for an adjournment for about three to four months so they could handle the Miranda issue.

"The case is not over, we've just had a setback," said Huron County Prosecutor Mark Gaertner. "The trial has been adjourned giving us the opportunity to pursue an appellate issue."

Goebel's attorney addressed the court, irritated by the prosecutor's decision not to dismiss the case.

"We came here today expecting a dismissal," Kelley said. "We believe that the court ruled correctly (on the Miranda issue). We are ready for trial, and I ask the court to proceed today."

Kelley said she felt "the prosecution is making a mockery of the court system," and that having the trial hang over the heads of her client and his family has caused a great deal of stress for them.

But Knoblock wasn't blaming the prosecution. Instead he found fault with how Birkenhauer did his job.

"The real culprit is the police officer. He did not properly perform his duty," said Knoblock, who noted Birkenhauer went to Goebel's home early in the morning, put Goebel in the police car and drove him to the police post to be interviewed.

"I'm convinced that any reasonable person would agree he was in (police) custody when his statements were taken, in violation of Miranda," said Knoblock, granting the prosecutor's request for an adjournment.

Knoblock also set a new trial date for 9 a.m. Feb. 9.

After leaving the courtroom, Kelley said she was very disappointed and felt the prosecutor changed his mind to dismiss the case because the victim's family pressured him.

"I came here today expecting the case to be dismissed, and the prosecution changes their mind based on public opinion. We want to go to trial. We wanted our day in court. The family has suffered because of this," Kelley said. "I feel justice will be served in the end. The prosecutor has a sworn duty, and I feel he caved in because they (the victim's family) paraded about 50 people into the courtroom."

Kelley was outraged over the fact the trooper "yanked the kid (Goebel) out of bed before 7 in the morning."

"He asked to talk to an attorney and wasn't allowed to talk to an attorney, instead he was dragged down to the police station to make a statement he didn't want to make. His Constitutional rights were violated. The prosecutor had to make a call — and it should not be guided by public opinion."

Gaertner denied Kelley's allegation that his decision was swayed due to public pressure.

"This is a case that needs to be prosecuted. I want the community to have confidence in the system," said Gaertner, who noted the case has taken a change in direction. "Trooper Birkenhauer has transferred from the Bad Axe post to a post in Detroit. We have a new trooper, Trooper Ruth Osborne, assigned to the case to look further into new allegations (relating to the case). In making the decision to proceed I also had to look at whether he (Goebel) is a dangerous individual or not. I feel this is a dangerous guy."

Gaertner said he believes appealing Knoblock's decision is a longshot, but is the right thing to do, "even if we don't prevail."

The parents of the 3-year-old girl said they were relieved prosecutors decided to go forward with the case.

"At least we still have a chance. There's still hope. I'm glad the prosecutor has decided they want to fight to protect the community and keep things right in the system," the child's mother said. "I hear his attorney (Kelley) tell how mentally and physically exhausted he (Goebel) and his family are. That's nothing compared to having your child put through something like this."

Goebel's bond in the case, set at \$7,500 personal recognizance with a provision that Goebel is to have no contact with the victim or her family, was continued.

The Small Wonders Christian Day Care was licensed to care for six children. A report by the State of Michigan Family Independence Agency Office of Children and Adult Licensing indicates Zita Goebel voluntarily closed the day care shortly after an investigation by the Michigan State Police began in November of 2004.

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Lott case goes to the jury

Wednesday, October 05, 2005

By Steven Hepker
shepker@citpat.com -- 768-4923

Henry V. Lott either botched the planned murder of his daughter or thought wrapping her in cellophane was therapeutic.

Both the prosecution and defense attorney described Lott's actions April 19 as not very bright.

"He did something stupid," defense attorney Jerry Engle told a jury Tuesday.

Stupid, but with deadly intent, Chief Assistant Prosecutor Mark Blumer said.

"Henry Lott is an amateur when it comes to murder," he said in final arguments. "He performed an incompetent effort to kill her."

Circuit Judge Charles Nelson handed the case to the jury Tuesday afternoon, and it was unable to reach a verdict in three hours. Deliberations resumed this morning.

Prosecutors charged Lott with attempted murder, child abuse, heroin possession and domestic violence. He planned to kill his 16-year-old daughter because she had broken up his marriage, and to save \$520 a month in child support, Blumer alleges.

Lott, a corrections officer, wrapped his daughter in plastic two times at her Springport home on April 19, each time covering her nose and mouth. He told state police it was to "sweat out" a fever.

The girl, who has since turned 17 and does not live with either parent, testified she was not sick.

Her dad talked her into skipping school so that he could take her shopping, she said.

During the ordeal, she said, he pressed his hand over her nose and mouth, and then covered her head with a pillow. She was able to breathe, she said.

Under the prosecution's theory, Lott planned to subdue his daughter until she passed out or went to sleep, and then he would inject her with a fatal dose of heroin. Both times he wrapped her, however, he set her free or she got loose.

Police said they found two packets of heroin on the floor of a patrol car in which Lott was transported. Engle said there is no proof it was Lott's: He has no history of drug use or selling drugs, and police did not find it in a pat-down search.

Lott kept a garbage bag of evidence in his truck all day April 19, rather than throw it away, Engle argued. Police found plenty of plastic wrap, but no syringe.

One potentially big issue is the girl's credibility. She has stolen money and a camera and once pleaded guilty of filing a false police report, Engle pointed out. Her mother, stepmother and father admitted she has been a troubled teen who bounced between homes.

Last spring, she had moved out of her father's house and back to her mother's house, apparently because he tried to be strict.

Lott, who did not testify, admitted to police he wrapped his daughter in plastic, but only to break her fever. He denied any plan to hurt or kill his daughter.

Engle argued the girl embellished her story to get her father in trouble, and to cover the fact she had skipped school again.

"This was a perfect excuse for her not to go back to Dad's," Engle said.

Editorials & Letters

Freedom to roam not good

FLINT JOURNAL LETTER TO THE EDITOR

BURTON

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Wednesday, October 05, 2005

JOURNAL READER

We will never solve the problems until parents regain control of their children and keep tabs on where, with whom and what they are doing. As long as they are allowed to roam the streets at all hours, they are bound to wind up in the wrong place at the right/wrong time!

Marlene Rozel

Burton



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING



MARIANNE UDOW
DIRECTOR

News Release

Contact: Stepheni Schlinker or Maureen Sorbet (517) 373-7394

Governor Granholm Declares October Child Support Month in Michigan

October 5, 2005

LANSING - Governor Jennifer M. Granholm has declared October 2005 Child Support Month in Michigan. This is the 19th consecutive year the state has observed Child Support Month in October.

"We want to recognize the efforts of the state's high performing child support workers, and the vast majority of parents who take responsibility and pay their child support," Granholm said. "Michigan ranked fourth highest in the nation for collections in fiscal year 2004 and Michigan parents paid the \$1.4 billion that was collected. We won't be satisfied until all children get all of the support to which they are entitled, and we will pursue those who can pay but do not."

The high performance has continued in fiscal year 2005. The Department of Human Services' (DHS) Office of Child Support reports that in the first three quarters of 2005 collections have topped \$1 billion. The federal government has also notified the state that Michigan will be eligible for federal performance incentive dollars for 2004. The amount Michigan receives will be determined by how many other states qualify for the incentives. The amount received in 2004 for the previous year's performance was \$27 million and this money was reinvested in the child support program.

"The DHS workers, friends of the court and prosecutors of this state deserve an enormous amount of credit," said Marilyn Stephen, director of the Office of Child Support. "And so do the vast majority of parents who are taking responsibility for their children. In fiscal year 2004, 595,729 children were owed support and 444,766 – or 75 percent – received support. We won't rest until that number is 100 percent."

In the first nine months of 2005, \$960 million was paid to families in Michigan, \$18 million was distributed to cover medical costs for children and \$74 million was collected to reimburse federal and state governments for public assistance provided to families.

For more information go to www.michigan.gov/dhs.

Allen waives arraignment, attorney asks for immediate trial

STACY LANGLEY, The Huron Daily Tribune

10/04/2005

BAY CITY — On Monday Bad Axe Attorney David B. Herrington asked for an "immediate trial date" for his client, Huron County Chief Assistant Prosecutor Stephen J. Allen. Allen faces a charge of domestic violence.

Both Allen and Herrington appeared in Bay City Monday morning for a pretrial conference before Bay County District Court Judge Craig Alston, who was assigned to preside over the matter.

Herrington said Allen waived his arraignment, and the court entered a plea of not guilty on his behalf.

"We don't believe that a crime was committed," Herrington said. "Domestic violence did not occur here. Someone can be arrested for domestic violence merely on the word of another person. All someone has to do is point the finger."

Herrington said he's not aware of any injury to Stephen Allen's wife, Jami Allen.

"I asked (Bay County Assistant Prosecutor) Margaret Leaming about the victim's statement, and she said 'the victim's statement will have no impact on how the case proceeds.'"

Jami Allen, a former Oakland County Sheriff's deputy, has told the Tribune the situation was a "marital misunderstanding between the two of them." She said she didn't think Allen should be charged with any crime for what happened that day.

Stephen Allen, 57, was arrested at his Port Hope area home after returning home from work on July 20. The couple, who are involved in divorce proceedings, reportedly had an argument and were quarreling about their dogs when Allen allegedly pushed his wife.

Jami Allen left the house and called 9-1-1 shortly after 6 p.m. requesting a police officer respond to the Port Hope area home.

Stephen Allen was arrested at the home by Huron County Sheriff's deputies and was lodged in the Huron County Jail for 20 hours before being released on bond.

No date has been set yet for a trial which will take place before visiting Judge Alston in the Huron County District Court.

The misdemeanor charge of domestic violence carries a possible sentence of up to 93 days in jail and/or a \$500 fine.

Man, 38, expected to be arraigned after rampage

Jackson Citizen Patriot

Wednesday, October 05, 2005

A 38-year-old Leoni Township man is expected to be arraigned today for carrying a concealed weapon after he threatened to kill his ex-wife's husband and led police on a brief chase Saturday. Leoni Township police responded to the 200 block of Holmes Street about 10 p.m. after the woman called 911 and said her ex-husband refused to leave and had a knife.

"He was in front of her house with a 9-inch long knife," said Leoni Township Police Department Officer Dave Lubahn.

"He was pounding his knife into the roof of the car asking her to send out her husband because he was going to kill him."

Lubahn was en route to the home when the suspect passed him driving a red Dodge Sundance headed south on Fifth Street.

Lubahn gave chase until the man stopped his car on the railroad tracks, then shot off again before stopping in the parking lot of a Fifth Street business.

Unsure if the man was still armed, Lubahn ordered the man out of the car and onto the ground until Jackson County Sheriff deputies arrived and the suspect was arrested.

A search of the man's car turned up a 9-inch knife on the floorboards near the driver's seat.

October 5, 2005

Medicare pitches to bombard nation's seniors

By KRISTEN HALLAM
BLOOMBERG NEWS

Fifty U.S. health companies are rolling out big-budget advertising campaigns vying for the business of senior citizens in government subsidized prescription-drug coverage worth more than \$60 billion a year.

Five large insurers — Aetna, Humana, PacifiCare, WellPoint Inc. and UnitedHealth Group Inc. — said they will spend a combined \$250 million this year to market and develop

their plans.

Over the next few months, 30 million seniors will be flooded with sales pitches on TV, in newspapers, in their local drug-stores and from independent insurance agents.

Residents of most states will be offered at least 12 different plans.

"There's going to be a profusion of confusion," said Ron Pollack, executive director of the consumer advocacy group Families USA.

The new Medicare drug ben-

efit passed by Congress in 2003, forecast to cost the U.S. government \$720 billion over the next 10 years, will be sold to seniors through private insurers.

To distinguish themselves, the insurers are embarking on marketing campaigns unlike any they have done before, and are looking for any advantage to connect with seniors.

PacifiCare will begin broadcasting TV ads this week using digitally altered black-and-white clips of Fred and Ethel

Mertz from "I Love Lucy."

Jacqueline Kosecoff, PacifiCare's executive vice president of specialty companies, said Fred and Ethel were chosen as characters identifiable to seniors and their children who saw them in reruns.

"To the extent there's a lot of competition for Medicare and seniors get bombarded, they're going to say, 'I need to talk to my agent,'" Kosecoff said. "They will go with the brands they know and trust."

Louisville, Ky.-based Huma-

na is joining forces with Wal-Mart, the world's biggest retailer, to promote its Medicare drug plans in 46 states.

Humana will sell its policies under the Wal-Mart name and will post sales representatives in 3,600 Wal-Mart locations.

Humana is sponsoring a U.S. tour by a fleet of RVs, stopping at 496 places, to encourage seniors to enroll in the program.

Aetna will distribute information to seniors through kiosks inside pharmacies run by CVS Corp. and Rite Aid Corp.

Dates to remember

- **Oct. 1:** Private insurers began marketing directly to Medicare recipients by mail, phone and e-mail.
- **Oct. 13:** First day to compare Medicare drug plans online at www.medicare.gov or by calling 800-633-4227.
- **Nov. 15:** First day to sign up for a Medicare drug plan.
- **Jan. 1:** First day to use the Medicare drug coverage if you have signed up.
- **May 15:** Last day to join a drug plan without paying a penalty, unless you qualify for an exception.

Medicare Drug Plan

Published: October 5, 2005

The New York Times

To the Editor:

Re "Drug Plans in Medicare Start Effort on Marketing" (news article, Oct. 1):

Just what we need to confuse us further: a plethora of drug plan choices.

I'm a slender, healthy 67-year-old who watches her diet, walks a lot, works out at the gym three times a week and has no prescribed medications whatsoever.

And yet because it is "inevitable" that I'll need some sort of drug treatment later on, I'm being urged (coerced?) to sign up for the Medicare discount drug plan now, "before it's too late."

If I don't sign up and for some reason need expensive medications after next May, I'll be zapped with a humongous monthly premium with a more ridiculous deductible.

So I'll be punished for remaining healthy all these years.

If it's true that our thoughts create our reality, I'll be fighting "the Big Brothers" with thought power: "Stay healthy." Hey, it's worth a try.

Kay T. Reilly
Rhinebeck, N.Y.
Oct. 1, 2005

Teens Arrested After Chase In Macomb County

Woman Says Suspects Attempted To Steal Her Car

POSTED: 2:59 pm EDT October 4, 2005

A police chase through several communities in Macomb County Monday evening resulted in the arrest of three teenagers.

The three teenagers are suspected of attempting to steal a woman's car on Rathbone Street in Mount Clemens at about 5:30 p.m., according to Macomb County Sheriff Mark Hackel. The woman provided police with a description of the teenagers' pickup truck, a Dodge Ram, which was located by a sheriff's deputy on Harper Avenue, *The Macomb Daily* reported.

The sheriff's deputy attempted to stop the pickup truck, which is believed to have been stolen, but the driver continued on at a high rate of speed, the paper reported. A Clinton Township police officer who assisted in the chase used a device -- similar to spike strips -- to disable the tires of the suspects' vehicle near Quinn and Harper Avenue, the paper reported.

Witness Louise Conyea said the teenager lost control when the officer placed the device in the street.

"Good for the cops. They did it right," said Conyea in the paper's report.

The teenagers tried to escape when they crashed into a ditch on Cottrell, east of Harper, the paper reported. The driver was arrested immediately. A second suspect was found hiding in a garage, and a third was located behind a parked truck in the driveway of a nearby home, the paper reported.

The residents who live in the home said they noticed the commotion outside, and saw a tennis shoe sticking out from behind their truck in the driveway. They went back inside to seek safety.

"We were scared that he might come after us. We didn't know if he had a gun or not," said resident Bill Bolding in the paper's report.

The teenagers, who are all Detroit residents, were being held at the Macomb County Jail. They were expected to face charges Tuesday.

Police said an innocent bystander's vehicle was hit during the pursuit. No serious injuries were reported.

A Clinton Township patrol car and sheriff's deputy's car were also damaged in the incident, the paper reported.

St. Clair Shores police and Michigan State Police contributed to the arrests, the paper reported.

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Walks help battle hunger

Jackson Citizen Patriot

Wednesday, October 05, 2005

As a number of Jackson-area residents are facing layoffs or are unemployed, and gasoline and home heating bills are expected to rise, they can anticipate some help as far as food donations as three areas of Jackson County plan CROP Walks on Sunday afternoon.

A quarter of the money raised will stay in the Jackson community for food banks and the rest to Church World Service for battling international hunger.

The Jackson walk begins with registration at 1 p.m. and the walk at 2 p.m. in the parking lot behind First United Methodist Church, 275 W. Michigan Ave. The goal is to raise more than \$18,000 through pledges and donations. A number of city churches will take part in this walk. Checks can be made out to CWS/CROP and mailed to Marcia Whitehead, 1865 Van Horn Road, Jackson, MI 49201.

The 10th annual Hanover-Horton walk will begin at noon at Horton Congregational Church, 110 S. Moscow Road, with a potluck dinner. Registration begins at 12:30 p.m. and the 4-mile walk starts at 1 p.m. It will end at Hillside United Methodist Church, at Moscow and Folks roads. Anyone interested in getting a form for collecting sponsors should call Hillside between 9 a.m. and noon at 563-2835.

Napoleon, Brooklyn and the Irish Hills area will meet for registration at 1:30 p.m. and the walk at 2 p.m. from Napoleon United Methodist Church, 210 Nottawa Seppee. Walkers are asked to bring to their church canned food, which will be donated to the Columbia Christian Interfaith Shelter.

The goal of this year's walk is to raise more than \$10,000. Cider and doughnuts will be served after the walk and people are asked not to ride bicycles, roller blades or skate boards.

For more information, call the church at 536-8609.

New St. Vincent store site still being sought Service ongoing at the thrift shop on 24th Street

By ANGELA MULLINS
Port HuronTimes Herald

The search to find a new spot for the St. Vincent de Paul thrift store continues more than nine months after its Port Huron Township building was sold.

Bill Brazier, executive director of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul for the Archdiocese of Detroit, said officials have been looking for a new site but so far have been unsuccessful.

In the meantime, the store continues to operate in a leased space at 1337 24th St. where it has served low-income families and the public for about 20 years. The building, which also housed the Blue Water Community Food Depot, was sold earlier this year to a private development group so the thrift store could move whenever a spot was found, Brazier said.

George Kish, president of the St. Vincent de Paul district council in St. Clair County, said cost is one of the main factors that likely will drive the decision to relocate.

The other factor should be location, he said. Community members need to have easy access to the store for its main purpose to be served.

"It needs to be in an area with a good bus route so people can use the facility readily without the expense of driving," Kish said "It should be in an area ... near those you are trying to reach."

The thrift store can break its lease with 90 days notice, Brazier said.

Food-depot operations in February were relocated to a storefront at 1041 Griswold St.

An ideal place would be between 8,000 and 10,000 square feet. The group has looked at a couple of sites on Pine Grove Avenue, but Brazier said the rent was too expensive.

No deadline has been set to make the move.

"We're trying to find an alternate location, but right now we're staying put where we're at," Brazier said. "We haven't found a place that would be able to improve our bottom line."

Contact Angela Mullins at (810) 989-6270 or amullins@gannett.com.

Originally published October 5, 2005

October 4, 2005

EASY PASSAGE OF SAME-SEX T.R.O. RESOLUTIONS EXPECTED

Two resolutions calling for a temporary restraining order to block the state from implementing employee benefits for same-sex domestic partners are expected to be approved easily in the Senate on Wednesday.

Action was held up on SR 68 and SCR 33 when they were introduced on Thursday, but the sponsor said on Tuesday he expects no problem seeing them pass when the chamber returns.

Sen. Alan Cropsey (R-DeWitt) said that while the resolutions are aimed at preventing the state from beginning same-sex benefits until the Supreme Court rules, the main point is to encourage the Supreme Court to act quickly on the case.

Last week, Ingham Circuit Judge Joyce Draganchuk ruled that same sex benefits for public workers do not violate the constitutional ban of same-sex marriage that the voters approved in the 2004 election because the benefits were a condition of employment and not of marriage.

Governor Jennifer Granholm said following the ruling that the state would then move ahead to implement the benefits.

Attorney General Mike Cox has appealed the ruling. His spokesperson could not be reached for comment on whether he had also asked the Supreme Court to take superintending control of the case and hear it without first going to the Court of Appeals.

State Employer David Fink said in a radio interview that while an appeal is inevitable, state workers should not be denied benefits they would otherwise be entitled to receiving.

But Mr. Cropsey said imposing the benefits would be blatantly unconstitutional. Plus, it would add cost to the state when the budget is struggling to remain balanced, he said.

According to a spokesperson for the Department of Civil Rights, no research has been conducted to determine how many state workers would be eligible for the benefits if they are established.

The resolutions were introduced last week and Mr. Cropsey originally intended them for quick action but Democrats objected, and Mr. Cropsey said Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema (R-Wyoming) said to hold off action until this week.

A Senate Democratic official said Democrats objected because they believe all controversial resolutions should first undergo a committee hearing.

As many as half the Democratic caucus may vote for the resolutions, the official said.



Michigan Builds

By Bill Patrick

Imagine the looming threat of 75 percent of your top leaders retiring in the next few years. That is the challenge the Leadership Academy was created to meet.

In 2001, the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) projected that about 150 of its top leaders would be eligible for retirement within the next five years. A succession plan was needed to build leadership bench strength from inside the organization. Partnering with Development Dimensions International (DDI), a consulting organization with expertise in identifying and developing exceptional leadership talent, DHS created its Leadership Academy.

The approach of the Leadership Academy is to select high-potential leadership candidates and accelerate their development over two years to prepare them to step into high-level jobs. This differs from the traditional approach in which management grooms several people to replace a particular high-level executive contemplating retirement. The Leadership Academy approach creates a pool of leaders who are developed, but not designated, for a particular position. This allows the organization to build leaders prepared to step up to the plate as needed.

Selecting the Right People

Eligibility is limited to employees already in management or professional positions. Applicants are asked to review a "realistic job preview" that describes high-level jobs at DHS. They then complete an online "ideal job inventory," which helps them see how their ideal job compares with

Bill Patrick is the director of the Office of Professional Development at the Michigan Department of Human Services.

Leadership Inside the Organization

high-level jobs at DHS. If they still would like to apply after this self-assessment, they submit a self-nomination form. The selection process has four components:

1. Situational judgment inventory—a one-hour test that measures leadership judgment and provides an indicator of leadership potential
2. Experience profile—A written exercise where candidates describe how they have demonstrated leadership competencies
3. An interview with a panel of top leaders
4. Reference checks

After the first two steps, the pool is reduced to 40–60 candidates, who move into the interview phase. DHS executives review the scores of all candidates interviewed and make a final selection of Leadership Academy members. About 20 new members are selected each year.

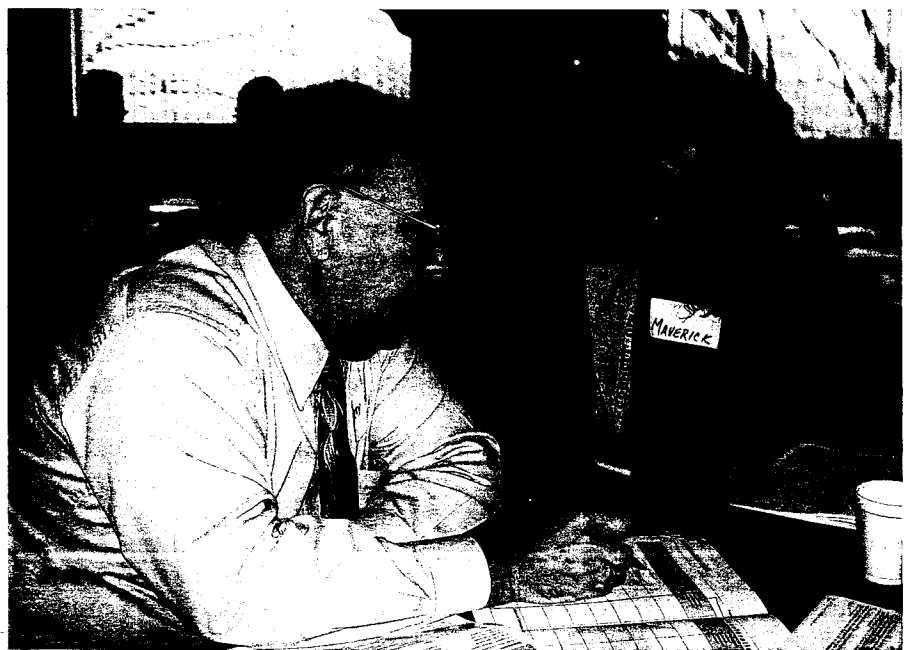
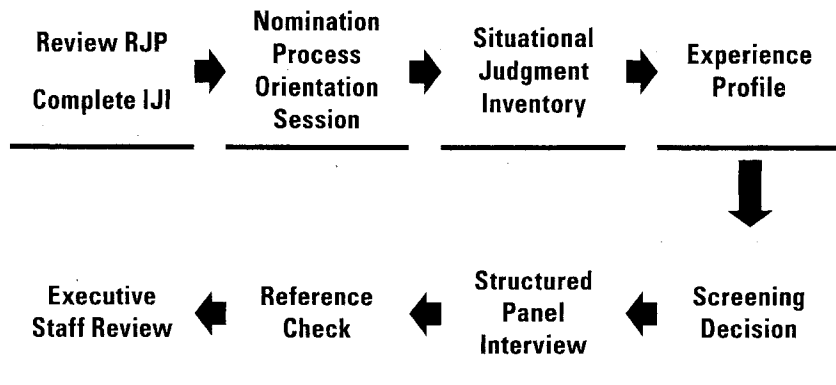
Challenging Developmental Opportunities

The academy begins with a multi-rater assessment where each new member, his or her manager, direct-report employees, and peers assess the member on 15 Leadership Academy competencies, which include building trust, facilitating change and communication, and developing a successful team. They receive coaching to help them understand their results and create a development plan.

Next, the candidates are paired with a mentor, who meets with them on a regular basis. Both the mentor and member receive training on mentoring. Coaching is available to mentors and members as needed.

Each month a learning forum related to one of the competencies helps members acquire knowledge and skills important for DHS leaders. Topics include “Building an Environment of

Selection Process Steps



Two members of the 2002 Leadership Academy work on an assignment together at a Learning Forum.

Trust,” “Leading Change” and “Leading High Performance Teams.” Members are given assignments after each session and they report to the group the following month on how they have applied the skills they learned.

Action learning comes next and challenges members to learn about leader-

ship by using the skills they learned in the classroom. The members are divided into four teams and each team is assigned a high-level DHS project. Once a month, each team meets with a coach to talk about what the members are learning from the project as well as their own leadership challenges.

Developmental assignments help members get experience in a part of the organization or at a level they have not experienced.

Promoting Leaders Who Are Ready to Lead

Academy members must compete for vacant positions just like any other employee. Leadership Academy members, however, tend to do well in job interviews because their training is aligned with the competencies used for selecting top leaders. They are able to indicate how they have demonstrated the competencies and receive positive reference checks from their managers.

Before and after multi-rater assessments showed significant improvement in overall skill levels increasing from 3.94 out of 5.0 before the Academy to 4.25 after. As a result, Academy members are more likely to be promoted than a comparison group of employees who did not participate in the Academy. Sixty-three percent of Academy members have been promoted, compared with 21 percent of the comparison group.

Success Factors

The Leadership Academy has been recognized by the American Society on Training and Development as a program that has made an outstanding contribution to advancing learning and performance in the workplace. The Tennessee Department of Transportation and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality are replicating it. DHS learned that a number of factors contributed to the success of the academy.

1. Align the Academy with top management expectations and organizational success factors. The Academy could not have succeeded without the support of the department director and executive staff. All aspects of the Academy were tied to competen-

Promotions—01 Academy and Control Group 2005



cies that were considered important to success as a leader at DHS.

2. Start with a broad-based planning team. DHS had key decision-makers on the planning team, including representatives from human resources, training, and field managers.

3. Avoid “reinventing the wheel” by looking at what others have done. When DHS began there were few models to follow and none that had all the elements of the Academy. DDI was helpful in asking the right questions to help the organization think through the issues and presented models that existed on the various components of the academy.

4. Create an open self-nomination process rather than a manager-nominated process. This is critical for government agencies that are accountable to strict guidelines of fairness and inclusiveness in any selection process. The open process led to a high regard among applicants with 96 percent saying they believe the selection process is fair. Self-nomination allows an organization to identify “diamonds in the rough”—employees with leadership potential who have not

had high visibility or the opportunity to demonstrate their skills. These people are often not selected during a manager-nominated process.

5. Use multiple selection tools. No single assessment tool is perfect, so multiple tools give a better picture of a candidate’s strengths. For example, DHS had two candidates who failed the situational judgment inventory but received perfect scores on the experience profile. Had only one tool been used, they would have been excluded. As it turned out, they both made it into the academy, successfully completed training and went on to be promoted.

6. Begin with developmental assessment and planning. It is critical that each member create a development plan customized to his or her needs.

7. Create a support team for each academy member. The team is made up of the member’s supervisor, mentor, and the Academy Management Team. The Academy Management Team provides coordination and conducts learning forums, developmental coaching, and action learning coaching. The supervisor

helps the member apply what he or she is learning on the job. The mentor helps the member implement the development plan by creating an environment during monthly meetings, where the member can reflect on their learning. Mentors, supervisors and members attend a training program where they learn how to provide support. Each supervisor, mentor, and member also meet to discuss the development plan so they can coordinate their efforts.

8. Support the mentors. With everyone so busy doing his or her job, the mentoring program can easily become a low priority. DHS has created a Mentor Support Network to help maintain the priority of mentoring. Mentors are periodically invited to attend learning forums with their member protégés. Mentors also meet periodically among themselves in a facilitated discussion session to share challenges and best practices. Periodic surveys are conducted with mentors and members to determine if they are meeting at least monthly. If a mentoring pair has not been meeting, coaching is provided to help them remove barriers and get back on track.

9. Provide an action learning experience. Leadership is about taking action. The action learning allows each member to apply what he or she learned in the classroom.

The Leadership Academy at the Michigan Department of Human Services has been successful in building leadership bench strength and in getting qualified professionals promoted to higher level jobs in the department. Leadership Academy components on assessment, planning, mentoring, assignments, action learning, and training work together to create a multifaceted learning environment. However, it is ultimately the members using Academy tools that develop their leadership potential. ■



The 2001 Academy. Twelve out of the 19 have been promoted and some have been promoted twice since graduating from the academy.



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Executive Staff
Karen Stock

(from Marianne Udow)

How Week



APHSA
American Public Human Services Association

in Washington

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Emergency TANF Bill Becomes Law

On September 21, President Bush signed H.R. 3672, which allows states serving Hurricane Katrina evacuees with short-term assistance to draw from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) contingency fund. Under the measure, which is now P.L. 109-68, states would not be required to pay a match or meet the 100 percent maintenance-of-effort requirement to access the contingency fund. For states to qualify for reimbursement for payment of these short-term cash benefits to evacuees, the evacuee may not be receiving cash benefits from the home state. The legislation also provides a grant for up to a 20 percent increase in TANF funds for Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana. It also waives certain requirements and penalties associated with TANF time limits and work requirements for the three affected states. The legislation's text is available at <http://thomas.loc.gov/>. The Office of Family Assistance (OFA) has been holding conference calls with states in preparation for issuing a Program Instruction that is scheduled for next week. OFA has also posted initial advice for states serving evacuees at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/hurricane.htm>.

APHSA Supports Emergency Health Care Legislation

On September 21, APHSA sent a letter of support to Senate Finance Committee Chairman Charles Grassley (R-Iowa) and Ranking Member Max Baucus (D-Mont.) regarding the Emergency Health Care Relief Act of 2005, S. 1716. In the letter, APHSA Executive Director Jerry Friedman expressed strong support for provisions in the bill that would give states 100 percent federal match for medical assistance provided to Hurricane Katrina evacuees and hold states harmless from scheduled reductions in federal match for fiscal year 2006. The letter also encourages special attention to Medicare Part D implementation in affected states. It also supports the TANF provisions included in S. 1716, particularly an increase in resources to directly affected states, access to the TANF contingency funds, and simplified administrative and penalty procedures. Also on September 21, the National Governors Association sent a similar letter that specifically supported the bill's 100 percent federal match.

Congress Passes Katrina Evacuee Tax Legislation

On September 21, the House and Senate passed H.R. 3768, the Katrina Emergency Tax Relief Act of 2005. The legislation aims to provide immediate tax relief to Hurricane Katrina victims and to spur commercial investment. It includes several provisions aimed at lower-income families such as modifying the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and the Earned Income Tax Credit. The bill creates a new category of individuals, "Hurricane Katrina Employee," under the tax credit that

currently includes residents of empowerment zones, TANF-eligible families, high-risk youth, veterans, Supplemental Security Income beneficiaries, and vocational rehabilitation referrals. It allows the credit for any employee from the core disaster area who is hired by an employer in the core disaster area within a two-year period, starting from August 28, 2005. A shorter-term category was also created for any individual who was living in the core disaster area and is hired before the end of 2005, regardless of the employer's location. The bill gives the Department of the Treasury authority to ensure that taxpayers do not lose deductions, credits, or filing status because of dislocations from Hurricane Katrina. It allows low-income working families an election to use prior-year income for the refundable earned income credit and the child tax credit.

House, Senate OK Emergency Employment Grant Bills

On September 20, the House unanimously approved the Flexibility for Displaced Workers Act, H.R. 3761. The legislation, introduced by Rep. Charles Boustany (R-La.), will help displaced Gulf Coast workers seeking employment and training through the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) National Emergency Grant (NEG) program. The bill gives additional flexibility under the NEG program to provide temporary disaster relief and employment and training help to victims in the Gulf Coast region. DOL has already issued \$191 million in emergency grants to states, and there are no additional resources authorized under the bill. H.R. 3761 will make NEG funds available to displaced workers for employment projects outside the designated Hurricane Katrina disaster area. It requires the secretary of labor to give priority to states in which areas have suffered major disaster, and second the remaining states that have been most heavily impacted. It allows NEG funds to be used to provide displaced workers with public sector jobs for up to six months; expands NEG eligibility to displaced individuals unemployed at the time of the disaster as well as those with no prior work history; and authorizes NEG payments to Gulf Coast residents not eligible for unemployment compensation or whose unemployment compensation has expired and who are participating in re-employment activities. On September 21, the Senate passed a similar version of the House-passed bill by unanimous consent. The legislation has been sent to the president for signature.

House Approves Head Start Reauthorization Bill

On September 22, the House approved the School Readiness Act of 2005 (H.R. 2123), by a vote of 231-184. The bill would reauthorize the Head Start program for six years with funding of \$6.899 billion for FY 2006. The bill would make numerous changes to the program, including increasing the requirements that current Head Start

grantees must meet to receive "priority" consideration for grant renewal; providing each state a grant to establish a State Early Learning Council to increase collaboration among early childhood programs; and increasing teacher qualification requirements. H.R. 2123 does not contain the controversial state demonstration project included in the 2003 House Head Start reauthorization bill, under which eight states would have received the Head Start funds that would otherwise go to grantees in the state to operate state or local demonstration projects consistent with the purposes of Head Start. The bill includes an amendment offered by Rep. Charles Boustany (R-La.) that would allow faith-based organizations operating Head Start programs to consider religion in hiring. Other adopted amendments would direct Head Start programs to increase outreach to homeless and foster children and require HHS to provide a package of Hurricane Katrina assistance including additional resources to Head Start agencies in the affected areas, waiver of documentation requirements for evacuees for six months, and authority to exempt affected Head Start agencies from providing their local match. The Senate's Head Start reauthorization bill, S. 1107, was passed by the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee on May 25 and awaits a Senate floor vote.

Community Services Block Grant Emergency Bill

On September 21, Senators Michael Enzi and Edward Kennedy introduced S. 1745, the Community Services Disaster Assistance Act. The bill would expand the availability of resources under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) for those affected by Hurricane Katrina. It would authorize states to transfer a portion of their CSBG administrative or discretionary funds to the Gulf Coast states. It also would establish a temporary income eligibility waiver for services funded by CSBG in places designated as disaster areas so evacuees will get services even if they no longer have the correct paperwork.

GOP Group Issues Medicaid Offset Proposals

On September 21, the House Republican Study Committee released a list of proposals labeled Operation Offset, containing numerous suggestions for offsetting the federal costs for Hurricane Katrina relief. The report proposes 10-year savings of \$1.2 trillion in program cuts and terminations across policy areas and federal initiatives, with \$450 billion coming from Medicaid, Medicare, and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). Operation Offset proposes a one-year delay for the implementation of the Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit, which would yield an estimated \$30.8 billion savings over 10 years. The proposal also suggests applying a cap on Medicaid administrative costs, increasing allowable Medicaid co-payment amounts, and block-granting the federal share for Medicaid acute care services. It also proposes a 5 percent increase in Medicare Part B premiums (from 25 percent to 30 percent); restructuring Medicare's cost-sharing requirements (to include a single deductible for Medicare Part A and B Services, a uniform 20 percent coinsurance rate, and an annual per-beneficiary cap on total cost-sharing liability); and imposing a 10 percent co-pay for Medicare home health services. Operation Offset also proposes eliminating coverage for childless adults under SCHIP and ending the redistribution of any unspent federal funding for SCHIP.

NCD Issues Post-Katrina Disability Recommendations

On September 19, the National Council on Disability (NCD) sent a letter to Michael Chertoff, secretary of the Department of Homeland

Security, outlining a series of recommendations to meet the needs of the large number of Hurricane Katrina evacuees with disabilities. The letter emphasized the need for urgent action to provide necessary life-sustaining supports and services for this population in both the short and long term. NCD's short-term recommendations include the establishment of a point person on disability who will report to the secretary and provide operation leadership, oversight, advice, and coordination for "emergency preparedness, disaster relief, and recovery" on behalf of individuals with disabilities. NCD also recommends the development and implementation of a Federal Disability Recovery Plan for Hurricane Katrina; creation of a Hurricane Katrina Disability Access Advisory Group; and use of all available personnel to provide funding and resources aimed at meeting the needs of Katrina survivors with disabilities. Long-term recommendations include ensuring the necessary resources, equipment, and training to address the needs of individuals with disabilities; training personnel on the needs of the disability population; and requiring that all new construction be fully applicable and employ the principles of universal design. The letter is available at http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/correspondence/2005/chertoff_09-19-05.htm.

HHS Awards FY 2004 Adoption Incentive Payments

On September 20, HHS announced \$14.5 million in adoption incentive payments to 24 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico for FY 2004. The incentive payments were awarded to states that increased the number of total adoptions, special needs adoptions, and older child adoptions over their FY 2004 adoptions. The funding was provided based on the Adoption Promotion Act (P.L. 108-145), which was signed into law on December 2, 2003. The act reauthorized the adoption incentive program through FY 2008 and appropriated a total of \$43 million per year for the bonuses. The key changes or new provisions in the act included the addition of older child adoption bonuses, updated baselines, a three-tiered bonus system, and a new penalty provision related to Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System submissions. In comparison, 31 states and Puerto Rico were awarded \$17.9 million for FY 2003. More information is available at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/news/press/2005/adoption_incentives.htm.

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